

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
 COMMENT AFTER FLYING IN NAVY JET FROM PUERTO RICO TO THE USS EISENHOWER
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Ride on Navy Jet to Eisenhower a "thrill" for Perry

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ABOARD THE NORFOLK-BASED CARRIER DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER — In a distinct change of pace for scholarly Defense Secretary William Perry, the 66-year-old mathematician slammed twice onto the deck of this warship and catapulted off again on board an S-3 Viking submarine hunter aircraft.

Perry, clad in a green flight suit and a red-and-white checkered crash helmet, sat in the co-pilot's seat of the jet, which can fly up to 300 mph. He flew from Puerto Rico to the carrier, landed on the warship, took off again and was tailhooked a second time as the warship traveled off Puerto Rico.

Afterward, Perry grinned and shook hands with Rear Adm. Harold Gehman, who is in charge of all the warships in the Eisenhower's 12-ship battle group.

After alighting from the jet, Perry said that "everyone ought to do it at least once," but one difficulty was "that sinking feeling" in your stomach right after the aircraft zooms off the ship and then begins to fly on its own power. "It's really a thrill. You don't think of it much as a punishment," he said.

Asked beforehand why he would subject himself to the exercise normally done by pilots in their 20s and 30s, Perry told reporters he wanted to understand the job stresses and strains of those who work under him.